1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FYS Tanala FYS

243 [173] no taboo against wet rice, but rarely raise it, because of the labor involved. The Zafimaniry still have a strong taboo against it. According to their own tradition, they were the last of the Memabe gentes to settle in the territory. They originally lived in the Ankaratra, a mountainous part of the plateau, and raised wet rice, like the other tribes of this area. Enemies attacked them when their men were dispersed, repairing their rice terraces. They were driven out of their territory and when they re-established themselves, they tabooed wet rice cultivation, which they held responsible for the calamity. The taboo is so strong that when Betsileo immigrants began to cultivate wet rice in their country, some twenty-five or thirty years ago, they broke down the terraces and destroyed the crop.

Tanala wet rice culture is still crude in comparison with that of the plateau tribes. They do not use fertilizer, sow in seed beds, or transplant. Terrace systems are still very rare. The soil of a natural swamp is turned over with spades to a depth of about 1 foot, all but the largest vegetation being dug in. Cattle are then driven back and forth over the plot until the earth is churned to a soft muck. The rice is sown broadcast but not trodden in. Later, the crop is weeded once or twice. The harvest sacrifice is the same as for the tany.

241 245 In addition to rice and the plants grown in the tany, the Memabe grow bananas, sweet potatoes and sugar cane. None of these are of great economic importance. Bananas are planted in or near the village, often in solitary clumps. The young plants are sometimes fenced to protect them from pigs, but require no other care. The fruit is small and of indifferent quality. It is cut green and hung up over the fireplace, where it soon becomes blackened with smoke. It is allowed to become soft and thoroughly ripe, then eaten raw. The plantain seems to be unknown.

296 171 The Tanala do not use banana fiber. The Betsileo, their neighbors, formerly used it extensively in weaving and raised certain varieties of banana almost exclusively for it. They claim that it was the first material woven by them.

244 Sweet potatoes are grown from the shoots. Bunches of these are planted in holes at intervals of about 2 feet. The ground is not prepared. New patches may be weeded a month or two after planting, but the growth of the vines is so luxuriant that they soon strangle all other vegetation. The plants begin bearing in six to eight months and continue to produce for two or three years, after which the tubers become small and fibrous. The roots are dug a few at a time, as

1: Linton 1-5 (1926-27, 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

222 bowl has four equally spaced lugs which are pierced vertically. Slender ropes of equal length pass through these and are tied together above the bowl, where a single long rope is attached. Sometimes the bowl is encased in rawhide, as a precaution against breakage. A few specimens are provided with flat wooden covers which slide on the four small ropes. The honey bowl is hung from a limb beside the hive and lowered to the ground when full.

257 The comb is taken to the village, where it is put into a sack of coarse matting (Fig. 4, b) and the honey squeezed out by means of a press made from a split log (Fig. 4, c). The sack is inserted between the halves and the projecting ends of the press wrapped with a rope. A short stick is then passed through the rope and pressure exerted by torsion. The solid end of the press is fastened to a post or the corner of a house. The honey is collected in a bowl below (Fig. 4, f).

After pressing, the honey is strained through cloth or matting and stored in deep, oval wooden boxes (Fig. 4, a). The sides of the box are cut from a single piece. The bottom is a separate piece, accurately fitted, inset and cemented in place with beeswax or [531] gum. There is a tight-fitting lid. The honey boxes of the Zafimaniry [131] are often elaborately carved. Identical honey boxes are used by the Betsileo and Imerina, but are rare or lacking in other areas.

263 Honey is considered best after it has begun to thicken and crystallize and it is usually kept for some weeks or months before being used. It is used for sweetening other foods and also eaten alone, [273] like candy. Much of it is employed in the manufacture of hydromel ("honey beer") and rum.

237 After the honey has been pressed out, the residue is boiled and strained to collect the wax. This is poured into shallow bowls, where [439] it solidifies. Most of the wax is exported. The natives themselves employ a little of it for coating blow-guns to make them airtight, for cementing the bottoms of wooden boxes, etc., but it is not important in their technology.

WILD VEGETABLE FOODS

222 The Tanala are familiar with a great variety of edible wild roots
137 and fruits. These are gathered in their season, but are of little importance except in times of food shortage. At most, they afford a little variety to the standard diet of rice and boiled greens. The principal wild fruits are the *voamadiry*, *ramotsy*, *ravendompoa* and *via*. Wild roots include the *ovyloa*, *orytsovo*, *vanika*, *ovindy*, *hafika*, *pihopika*, and *hafy*.

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FTS Tanala FTS

mat. Mats of palm leaves are the handsomest, as they are almost white with a glossy surface, but they do not wear well. Floor mats, etc., are always woven as a whole, not made from pieces sewn together, as among some other Madagascar tribes. 285

At least 80 per cent of the hard mats are undecorated. The commonest decoration consists of a line of broader twilling running around the mat 2 to 4 inches from its edges and parallel with them. When there is further decoration, the space inside this border is divided into a series of squares which are separated by bands of wide twilling. The twilling within each square differs from that of the adjoining squares, the various types of twilling being arranged symmetrically (Fig. 12, d). The designs are not named and have no special significance. They are of the simplest geometric type and there are no attempts to reproduce natural forms. At the present time a few colored mats are made, but these are a recent development and the dyes are always anilines. In many cases the colored patterns are nothing more than diagonal strips which intersect at various points, the woven designs running across them unbroken. 295 681

Soft mats are made principally by the southern Tanala, who employ them as a substitute for cloth. They are identical with those used by the southeast coast tribes and may have been introduced from that region. They are woven from various tough sedges, *harofo* and *hovona* being the best. In some localities these are cultivated in flooded beds, like rice. The leaves are very dark green, tubular, like garlic, and grow 18 inches to 2 feet high. They are harvested when the tips begin to turn yellow, rolled in powdered kaolin until thoroughly coated, then spread out on mats in the sun. When nearly dry, they are made up into bundles about 2 inches in diameter and beaten with a cylindrical wooden mallet or rice pestle until they become soft and pliable. They are never split. 285 [171] [248

The technique of weaving is the same as for the hard mats, except that the soft mats are usually woven in strips not over 18 inches wide. These are later sewn together to form blankets and garments. The best ones are made from small stems and are so closely woven that they resemble coarse canvas. They are rarely decorated. After weaving, the mat is taken to running water, kneaded and worked under water with the feet, to make it more pliable.

All Tanala basketry is of the hand-woven type.[1] Coiled basketry is unknown and its general distribution in Madagascar suggests that it has been introduced from Africa in relatively recent times. 295 179

[1] The classification used is that of Otis T. Mason, Aboriginal American Basketry, Report of U. S. National Museum, 1902.

295 352 along the sides by means of draw strings threaded through the binding. Small separate squares of matting are inserted under the edges of the hand, forming the ends of the stool. When first made, these stools are nearly spherical (Fig. 3, b).

[534] Pouches and stools are sometimes decorated with simple woven designs like those used on mats, but the bulk of Tanala basketry is devoid of ornament and rather coarsely woven.

495 [524] Baskets of wicker work and open weave are made exclusively by men. The material is a tough, flexible vine called *raky*. This is split and flattened. Wicker work baskets are extremely rare, only one specimen being collected. This is a small, cylindrical, covered basket identical with those manufactured by some of the southeast coast tribes and was probably made in imitation of these (Fig. 12, d). The members run vertically and horizontally.

[224] Wicker work technique is regularly employed for one type of fish scoop. This has the form of a half cylinder, the rigid vertical elements of the wicker work running crosswise. The flat ends of the scoop are formed by bending the longitudinal spints inward and fastening them together with rough twined work in bark (Fig. 3, b). Wicker work technique is also used for house doors, the material being split bamboo, and for small open frames used for smoking fish.

In the technique which I have called open weave, the foundation consists of two series of parallel, diagonal members intersecting at regular intervals. Horizontal members are woven over and under these immediately above each intersection (Fig. 13, c). The finished fabric has large six-sided meshes. This technique is employed for deep, narrow, oblong baskets, one of which is to be found in nearly every household (Fig. 13, f). It is hung up beside the fireplace and utensils are dropped into it after washing, the open meshes allowing them to drain and dry quickly. Because of their stiffness, such baskets are also used for storing eggs and other breakables. The same technique is used for the close-fitting, semi-rigid network woven about gourds used for storing grease (Fig. 13, e), and in the manufacture of a large heart-shaped type of fish trap (Fig. 3, d). [171] It seems to be almost universal in Indonesia and may have been brought to Madagascar from that region.

285 226 Twined work is employed in the manufacture of fish traps, eel cages, fish scoops and hanging platforms, but never for real baskets. The traps are conical or bottle shaped and the cages cylindrical. They are made from closely spaced, lengthwise strips of bamboo, about ½ inch wide. At intervals of 5 to 8 inches these strips are

1: Linton E-6 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

411 with cord in the form of a cross. The ends are ground to keen points. The weapon is thrown with an overhand motion and has an effective range of about 15 yards. Natives say that it is feared because, when it strikes a shield, it will pivot around it and wound the man behind. At present it has fallen into disuse, like all other weapons. The Antaisaka, on the southeast coast, have a similar weapon which they call *fiviapo*. The Mahafaly also say that this was the principal arm of the Kimosy, the aborigines of the southwestern part of the island.

411 223 Slings are still in ordinary use for hunting birds. The Tanala are not considered especially good slingers by the other tribes, but I was often amazed by their skill. The maximum effective range seems to be about 75 yards while at 50 yards slings are as dangerous as firearms in native hands.

411 Slings are made from raffia or, less frequently, bast. Occasionally the pocket is formed by dividing the sling into two strands (Fig. 24, d) but this type seems to be rare. Most slings have a pocket about 4 inches long and 1½ to 2 inches wide at the center, tapering toward the ends (Fig. 24, e, e1). The cords are usually wrapped for 2 to 3 inches beyond the pocket on each side. The total length of the sling, folded for use, is about 30 inches. The release cord ends in a knot. The retained cord is longer and tapers to a slender tail which is wrapped around the palm. In about 50 per cent of Tanala slings one cord is of plaited and the other of twisted fiber. The natives could give no reason for this except that it was an ancient practice. [171] Slings from the Marquesas and Society Islands show the same peculiarity. Smooth river pebbles are used as ammunition. There are no indications that prepared slingstones have ever been used.

The ordinary axe, *antsi*, has already been described in the section on Wood Working (Fig. 10, d). It serves both as a tool and as a weapon and native men never travel without one. At the time the tribe was disarmed the natives surrendered their spears and other weapons readily, but maintained their right to carry axes, saying that they could not live in the jungle without them. In addition to the ordinary axes there are war axes, *antsi loza*. These have long heads pointed at the end, like a heavy single-edged knife. The handle is often as much as 3 feet long (Fig. 25, a). Such axes are now rare.

Shields, *paisy*, have been obsolete for many years. They were round or slightly oval and quite small, the largest not over 2 feet in diameter. The body of the shield was made of soft, light wood.

524 Tetotums, also called *tsoroka*, are among the commonest toys, being used by children of both sexes and all ages and even by adults. They are made from flat pieces of wood in the form of two triangles joined at the apex. Small crosspieces are usually attached to the ends of the cords (Fig. 26, b).

Hoops are used by small children. They are of three types: a simple hoop made from a piece of vine or a withe bent into a circle and the ends lashed together, a hoop of twisted vine (Fig. 26, g), and a netted hoop. The first two are rolled along with the hand or a small stick. In the netted hoops the interior is filled with a rough network of bark cord to the center of which a short stick is fastened. The hoop is trundled along by this handle. The netted hoop seems to be the favorite of very small children (Fig. 26, e, f).

A wooden cross about 1 foot across is thrown into the air and lassoed with a loop of cord as it falls. The sides of the arms are usually notched, making it easier to catch. It is played by one person, who both throws and catches. This game is called *hirasana* (Fig. 27, c). It is a favorite with boys and young men.

[171] There is a toy identical with the European diabolo. A double cone of wood is tossed and caught on a string between two sticks. The resemblance to the European game is so close that I suspect it may be an introduction, but the natives, who are usually reliable [225] in such matters, insist that it is old (Fig. 28, a). It seems to be a favorite game with adolescents.

One of the most important Tanala toys is the top, *tsofrioma*, three types being in use. The simplest consists of a straight stick, 5 to 7 inches long and pointed at one end, which is thrust through a round, flat, wooden whorl, much like a spindle whorl (Fig. 27, *f*, *j*). The top of the shaft is grasped between the fingers and thumb and it is set spinning by a quick twist. Tops of this type are often very well made and the whorl may be carved or stained (Fig. 27, h).

Tops of the second type have a heavy, conical body of solid wood with a short stick projecting above. They are spun with a cord, which is wrapped around the projection and then drawn off rapidly. The cord passes through a hole in a flat strip of bamboo. The bamboo is pressed against the stem of the top as the cord is drawn off, insuring even tension (Fig. 27, *d*).

Tops of the third type are shaped like those of the second except that they lack the stem (Fig. 27, *e*). They are spun with whips of plaited bark. Top spinning seems to be limited to boys and young men.

534 from the midrib of a raffia palm frond. The bamboo instrument appears to be the oldest and the Tanala use it to the practical exclusion of the raffia one.

The bamboo *marovany* is made from a section of large bamboo, about 3 inches in diameter, which is cut off 2 to 3 inches beyond the septum at both ends (Fig. 30, g). The strings are made by cutting two parallel grooves a sixteenth of an inch apart ending an inch within the septa. The strip of fiber between the grooves is then detached from the body of the bamboo, but left attached at the ends. Above and below the strings, the joint is wrapped with several turns of split vine, to keep the ends of the strings from tearing out. The number of strings varies from eight to sixteen, evenly spaced around the entire circumference of the instrument. It is tuned by inserting a bridge, cut from dry gourd shell, under each end of each string. The varying height and position of these bridges give different tones. I was unable to understand the Tanala method of tuning. Apparently each player arranged his instrument to suit himself. The Imerina and Betsileo now tune their instruments on the European scale, covering two octaves.

The player sits and holds the instrument on his knees vertically, with the upper end directed slightly outward, and picks the strings with his fingers. Among the Imerina, young dandies often permit the nails on the little fingers of both hands to grow very long, as much as an inch and a half, and use them as picks to reach the strings on the *farther* side of the instrument. Such nails also indicate that their owner does not perform manual labor, so they are highly valued. The player often sings and accompanies himself. The instrument has a pleasing tone and could easily be adapted to European music.

The raffia stem *marovany* is identical in principle with the bamboo one just described (Fig. 30, h). The section of midrib is first split longitudinally and hollowed out for about three-quarters of its length. The two halves are then lashed together by vine wrappings at the ends. The tone is rather inferior to that of the bamboo *marovany*.

The *lokanga*, a curious three-stringed guitar with a large resonator made from an inverted half gourd, and the true guitar, both seem to be unknown to the Tanala. The former is identical with an [178] instrument used in the Congo, in Africa, and is almost certainly an importation from that continent. It is a favorite instrument with wandering musicians, who are fairly numerous in the plateau and among the tribes of the west and south. The guitar, from its form, [177] is probably of Indian origin.

XI. ART

531 171 ● The art of the Malagasy, although nowhere very rich or varied, is pure art, in the sense that it is inspired entirely by aesthetic considerations. Aside from a few naturalistic carvings used as memorials to the dead, for magical purposes, or as decorations on containers for charms, their art products seem to have no religious or magical connotations. Even the Sihanaka, who have developed and named a variety of elaborate mat designs, claim that the purpose of such designs is purely decorative. In most tribes the designs are not named and no significance is attached to them.

Some tribes even go a step farther in aesthetic expression and make art objects which serve no utilitarian purpose. Thus the Bahnilava manufacture small baskets of fantastic shapes, mats and fans embroidered with raffia, etc., which are never used, but which hang on the walls of the dwellings much like pictures in our own houses. The tribes of the far south take delight in elaborately decorated baskets and keep many empty ones standing on their shelves. The Sihanaka weave amusing figures of men and animals from papyrus and carve small paddles which the men carry as a part of full dress, like swagger sticks. The Bara even carve small images of men and animals which are pure bric-a-brac and take delight in deliberate caricatures, especially of unpopular white officials.

577 581 In contrast with these art loving tribes, the Tanala, with the single exception of the Zafimaniry gens, seem to have very little aesthetic sense. The little that they have expresses itself in good craftsmanship rather than decoration. Their houses, although well built and neatly kept, are severely plain. Their tools and utensils are simple in form and devoid of ornament. Cloth, where woven, is decorated with plain stripes and even their mats and baskets are, for the most part, undecorated. Only wood carving shows any development, and that only among the Zafimaniry.

322 531 Until about twenty years ago the only Tanala who did any wood carving were the Zafimaniry gens of the Menabe. Individuals in other gentes sometimes scratched zigzag lines on the handles of ladles and cut the handles of their spoons into ornamental outlines (Fig. 7, a, b) but such decoration was exceptional. In recent years there has been an increase in wood carving. At present there are a few semi-professional carvers among the Ikongo. These men have learned the art from the Bara. Their work consists, for the most